

REMARKS

Applicants hereby cancel claim 44 and add new claims 56-58. Support for new claims 56-58 can be found at least at pages 14-15 and Figures 3-5 of Applicants' specification.

Information Disclosure Statement/PTO 1449 Forms

Applicants have not yet received initialed copies of the PTO-1449 forms submitted to the USPTO on October 20, 2003 and January 9, 2004. Applicants request initialed copies of the PTO-1449 forms previously submitted in connection with this application in the next Office action. For the Examiner's convenience, new copies of these PTO-1449 forms are provided along with a copy of the return receipt postcard stamped by the USPTO acknowledging receipt of the PTO-1449 forms.

Rejection of Claims 29 and 44-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office action claims 29 and 44-55 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the article by Eckert et al. ("Eckert") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,654,679 issued to Mavretic et al. ("Mavretic"). Applicants hereby cancel claim 44. In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 29 and 45-55 are in condition for allowance.

For the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) to be proper, the references, either alone or in combination, must teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. Applicants

respectfully submit that neither Eckert nor Mavretic, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest every claim element of the claimed invention.

Claims 29 and 45

With respect to claim 29, neither Eckert nor Mavretic teach or suggest, at least, “generating an AC current using a solid state switching power supply comprising one or more switching semiconductor devices.” The Office action suggests that the next to last line of page 198 of Eckert teaches or suggests this claim limitation. Applicants respectfully submit that the silicon rectifier identified on page 198 of Eckert is not a switching semiconductor device. Further, Eckert does not teach or suggest a solid state AC switching power supply.

Applicants also respectfully submit that Mavretic does not teach or suggest the above-referenced claim limitation. While Mavretic discloses switches, the switches are components of a matching network, they are not components of a solid state switching power supply. For example, the switches are part of a switch circuit (304) used to turn fixed capacitors on and off in an impedance matching network (220). See col. 4, lines 20-25 and lines 41-53. Further, Mavretic does not suggest or teach a solid state switching power supply. Rather, Mavretic discloses an RF power generator. See Mavretic, col. 3, line 66 through col. 4, line 19 and Figures 2 and 3.

Applicants respectfully submit, for at least these reasons, that neither Eckert nor Mavretic, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest every claim element of the

claimed invention. Applicants thus respectfully submit that claim 29 is in condition for allowance. Claim 45 depends directly from claim 29. For the above-mentioned reasons regarding claim 29, Applicants submit that this claim is also in condition for allowance.

Claims 46 - 55

With respect to claims 46 and 51, neither Eckert nor Mavretic teach or suggest, at least, a “dielectric spacer that electrically isolates the plasma chamber into a plurality of portions to prevent induced current flow from forming in the plasma chamber itself” or a “dielectric spacer that electrically isolates the plasma chamber into a plurality of portions to prevent induced current flow from forming in the plasma chamber itself.”

Applicants respectfully submit, for at least these reasons, that neither Eckert nor Mavretic, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest every claim element of the claimed invention. Applicants thus respectfully submit that claims 46 and 51 are in condition for allowance. Claims 47-50 and 52-55 depend, directly or indirectly, from claims 46 and 51. For the above-mentioned reasons regarding claims 46 and 51, Applicants submit that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

New Claims 56 - 58

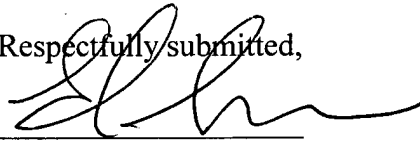
Support for new claims 56-58 can be found at least at pages 14-15 and Figures 3-5 of Applicants' specification. Applicants submit that new claims 56-58 are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration of all pending claims in due course. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with Applicants' attorney would expedite allowance of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned attorney at (617) 526-9712.

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Respectfully submitted,



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